# TORCH SONG ECOLOGY

## SONG # 1

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# TORCH SONG ECOLOGY Vol.1

トーチソング・エコロジー1

いくえみ綾

IKUEMI RYO

ブックデザイン　佐藤亜沙美（cozfish）

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DON'T THINK YOU CAN FOOL ME WITH THAT...
IDIOTS...
SONG #1

# TORCH SONG ECOLOGY

Vol.1

IKUEMI RYO

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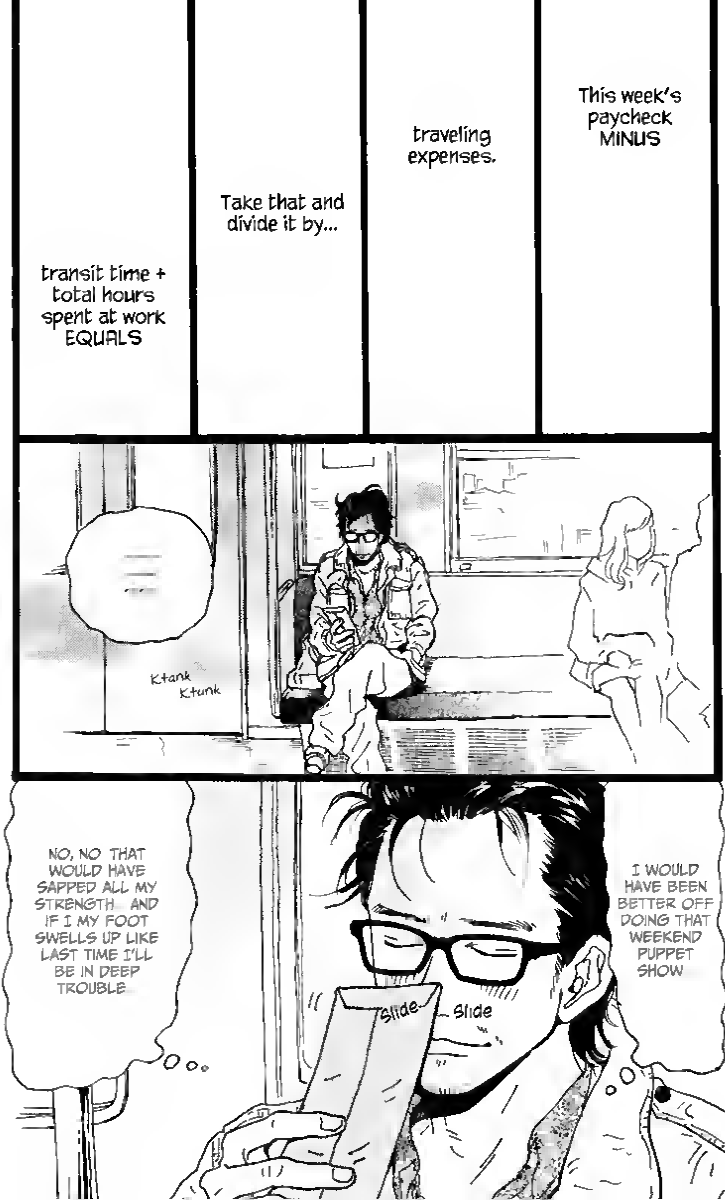
I must be out of it because for several days now I've had a song playing in my head that I've never even heard before...

.....
.....
What's that noise?
Ohh.
That must be the sounds of bowling...
at some faraway construction site.
.....
Whatever.
I'm starving.

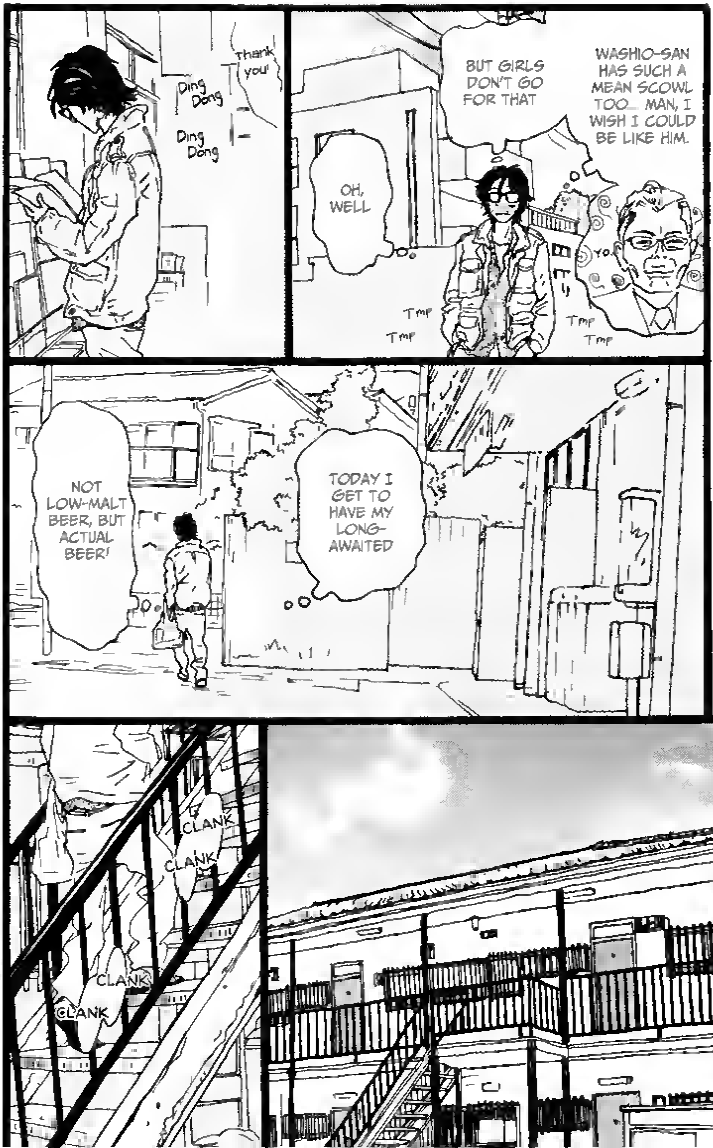
Dammit.
My stomach's gonna growl at any second now.
DIDN'T I TELL YA NOT TO STICK YER NOSE IN OUR BUSINESS?
My bento.
HEY, KID.
UH?
Should have hurried up and eaten it earlier.
Well, I'm thankful to at least have food to eat.
sound appetizing.
Chew
Chew
Chew
Chew
But, man, a "shumai bento" doesn't

AND CUT!
Ahh.
My stomach, my stomaaaach.
Dammit.
Dammit, dammit.
Damn, my stomach.
If I start imagining those pathetic shumai, I'll just get hungrier.
THAT WAS GREAT.

THAT WAS A CLOSE CALL, EH?!
HEY
Looks good
Yeah
Not bad
DIRECTOR! CAN I HAVE A MOMENT?
GOOD JOB!
GOOD JOB!
OH, THANKS
THANKS
BOW
YES!
MY SINCERE APOLOGIES!
YES, GOOD JOB
SHOP
OH, WHAT'S WRONG?
IT'S ABOUT THE SCENE WE WERE TALKING ABOUT THE OTHER DAY.
I've been thinking about it
Uh-huh, Uh-huh
OH, CAN I HAVE THIS?
GO AHEAD
THANK YOU
HUMAT


transit time + total hours spent at work EQUALS
Take that and divide it by...
traveling expenses.
This week's paycheck MINUS
Ktank Ktunk
NO, NO THAT WOULD HAVE SAPPED ALL MY STRENGTH... AND IF I MY FOOT SWELLS UP LIKE LAST TIME I'LL BE IN DEEP TROUBLE...
Slide Slide
I WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER OFF DOING THAT WEEKEND PUPPET SHOW

Ktank Ktank
Turn
Ktank Ktank
TOUSLE TOUSLE
TOUSLE
GIRLS THESE DAYS ARE RIDICULOUSLY CUTE
Ktank Ktank
Ktank Ktank
WELL, NOT EXACTLY "RIDICULOUS",
BUT MY IDEA OF PERFECTION
Ktank Ktank
I'M NOT UNGRATEFUL FOR IT
Ktank Ktank
BUT...
THAT TSUBASA HAYATO IS A GOOD-LOOKING GUY
"TSUBASA"
PLUS IT'S HIS REAL NAME!
HE EVEN TALKS BACK TO THE DIRECTOR


Ding Dong
Ding Dong
Thank you!
OH, WELL
BUT GIRLS DON'T GO FOR THAT
WASHIO-SAN HAS SUCH A MEAN SCOWL TOO... MAN, I WISH I COULD BE LIKE HIM.
Tmf
Tmf
Tmf
Tmf
TODAY I GET TO HAVE MY LONG-AWAITED
NOT LOW-MALT BEER, BUT ACTUAL BEER!
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK

ROLL
RUSTLE
WHAT?
HM?
WHY?
HUH?
POTATOES?
WHO FROM?
WHAT FOR?
I look forward to seeing you
Kusaka

THUD
IT'S KINDA CREEPY!
WHEN I'M NOT AT HOME?
WITH POTATOES?
UHHH IS THIS ONE OF THOSE NEW NEIGHBOR GREETING RITUALS?
IS THIS REALLY EDIBLE..?
WELL, DUH.. IT HAS TO BE..
DO I HAVE RELATIVES IN HOKKAIDO?
POTATOES?
AND WHAT ELSE?
NIKUJAGA.. POTATO SALAD BUTTERED POTATOES..?
AN INGREDIENT FOR CURRY..

AH HH.
KNOCK KNOCK
I BLACKED OUT...
THUD .....
IT'S BEEN HAPPENING SO ABRUPTLY LATELY HAHA...

IT'S ME!
BANG BANG BANG!
SU-CHAN, ARE YOU IN THERE?
CLICK
YO!
WHAT WERE YOU DOING?
JUST GOT HOME A SECOND AGO
WHAT'D YOU DO TODAY? PUPPETS?
Coming in!
FILMING.
TSUBASA HAYATO'S DEBUT MOVIE...
WOW, THAT'S GREAT!
You mean that yakuza role?
I'M JUST A STAND-IN TO MAKE THE HEAD COUNT WITH NO LINES
WAIT, WHY'S IT SO DARK OUT-SIDE?
Pitch dark
BECAUSE IT'S NIGHT-TIME?

NO WAY.
IT WAS STILL BRIGHT WHEN I GOT HOME JUST NOW.
I BET YOU BLACKED OUT AGAIN
OH WELL. DRINK UP!
THAT'S MINE
GYAHA!
MIRUKO-NEESAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING NOW?
AHH, YOU WANNA KNOW?
DO YOU?
I'M FAILING ALL MY AUDTIONS!
IT'S AMAZING. JUST WHEN I THINK I'LL LAND A ROLE, I END UP LOSING IT
. THE DRINK'S ALL YOURS
THANKS!
OH, CAN I HAVE THE BENTO?
GO AHEAD

HEY, THE SCRIPT
DID YOU READ IT? WAS IT INTER-ESTING?
YES
MAY BE
TSUBASA HAYATO'S A TOTAL HUNK
HE LOOKS LIKE MY FRIEND FROM HIGH SCHOOL.
NO KIDDING?
HOW OLD IS THIS GUY? TWENTY-SOMETHING?
MAYBE TWENTY-ONE OR TWENTY-TWO?
SO HE'S NOT THAT MUCH YOUNGER THAN YOU
WAIT, HOW OLD WERE YOU AGAIN?
TURNING TWENTY-SEVEN
HUH?
YOU'RE GETTING OLD
HOW OLD DID YOU THINK YOU WERE?
HAHAHA.
HAHAHA.

PEEK
HEY.. IF I FAIL THE NEXT AUDITION, I THINK I'LL GO BACK TO MY HOME-TOWN
HMM...?
PLOP
Chew
Chew
Chew
Chew
YOU KNOW... I'VE HEARD THAT SO MANY TIMES BEFORE, I DON'T EVEN CARE ANY-MORE
AW, REALLY?
Ho Ho Ho Ho
IS SOMEONE SINGING?

NEXT DOOR?
SO THIS IS WHAT I'VE BEEN HEARING LATELY...
YEAH.
HEY,
SOUNDS LIKE A CHILD.
THAT VOICE
BUT,
Oh.
So that's it.

THAT'S NOT A KIDS' SONG.
WHAT IS IT?
CHAN-SON...?
CAN'T TELL
IT STOPPED
SU-CHAN.
I'M REALLY LEAVING.

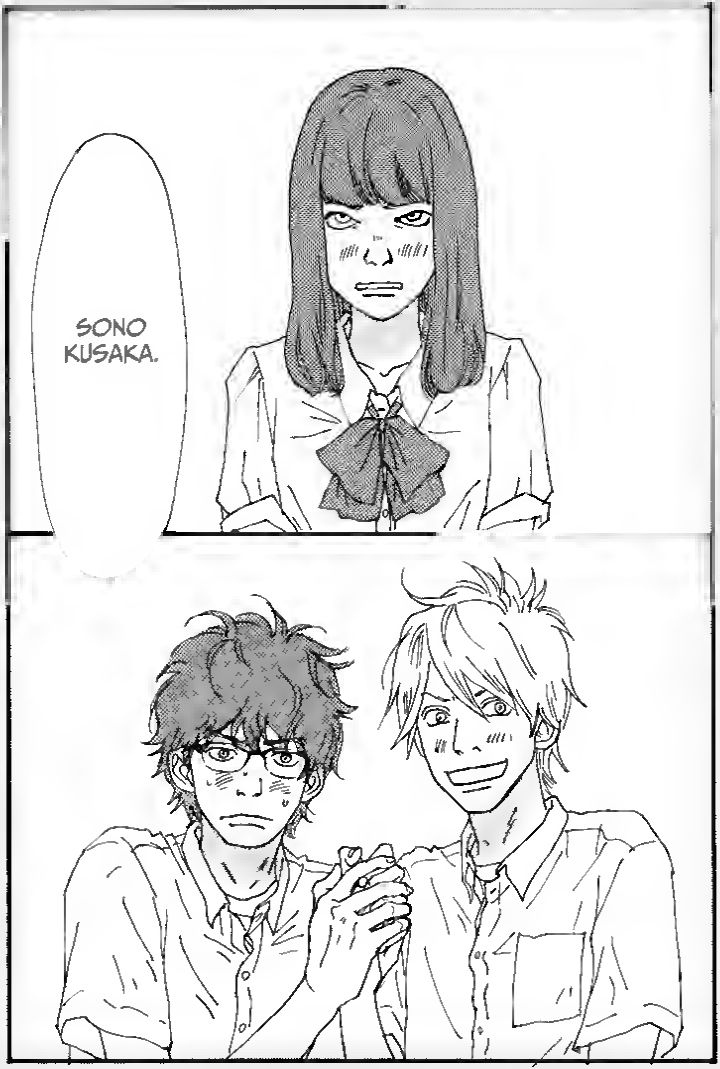
SAPPORO
DRAFT BEER
.....
.....
URRRRRRR-RGGGGH..
WHAT TIME IS IT...? MORN-ING...?
WHY... DID I WAKE UP...?
COME TO THINK OF IT, I WAS OUT LIKE A LIGHT WHILE WAITING TODAY WASN'T I...?

SWIII

WILL IT SURVIVE..?
ANYWAY, OUR AGENCY..
WAS SHE SERIOUS..?
PROBABLY NOT...
DID SHE TELL OUR BOSS?
GOING BACK HOME..
THRUST
I NEED TO GO SOAK IN THE MORNING SUN!
WHEN I FEEL LIKE THIS,
FWUP
NOPE
WAIT, IT'S PITCH DARK!
BAM!!
THE SUN'S THIS WAY!

OH
GOOD MORNING
G-
ACHOO!
GOOD MORNING
SNIFF
THE YOKEL
NEXT DOOR
ARE YOU MY NEXT DOOR-
UM.

KIYOTAKE-KUN?
AREN'T YOU SUSUMU KIYOTAKE?
IT'S ME.
REMEMBER?

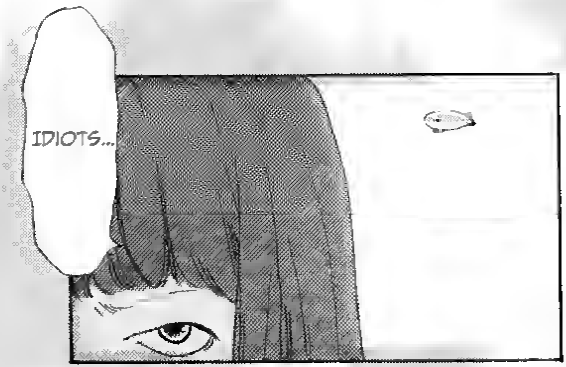

SONO KUSAKA.

NOW LISTEN UP, SU
THIS ALL HANGS ON YOUR ACTING ABILITY
DON'T FORGET! I'M "GAY",
AND YOU'RE MY "BOY-FRIEND"!!
GOT IT?
THAT'S FINE, BUT...
...SHUN,
DO YOU REALLY NEED TO SET ALL THIS UP
JUST TO MAKE A GIRL GIVE UP?
I TOLD YOU!

AS LONG AS WE EMPHASIZE THAT WE'RE MAKING IT AN EXCEPTION BY TELLING HER, SHE'LL KEEP A LID ON IT
PEOPLE ARE GOING TO SPREAD RUMORS
..ARE YOU SURE?
TO MAKE HER THINK IT'S PHYSIOLOGICALLY IMPOSSIBLE
I WANT TO MAKE SURE TO SQUASH ALL HOPE!
WHO GETS TO BE THE MAN?
OK!
SO LET'S DECIDE
I UNDERSTAND
WITH ACTING, EVEN THE SMALLEST DETAILS COUNT!
YES!
...DOES IT EVEN MATTER?
ONE'S A MAN, THE OTHER'S A WOMAN
YOU KNOW HOW IT GOES?
..HUH?

That day, seated in front of the window on the second floor of a cafe,

After saying all that, we ended up hamming it up and exposed ourselves.




But that day, while gripping onto my best friend's hands,

When I thought about it later, I realized it was just a gold blimp.

something was glinting in the sky behind Sono Kusaka as she was speaking.

the strange feeling of exultation I got from trying to be someone different, along with a tiny pang of guilt and the golden light,

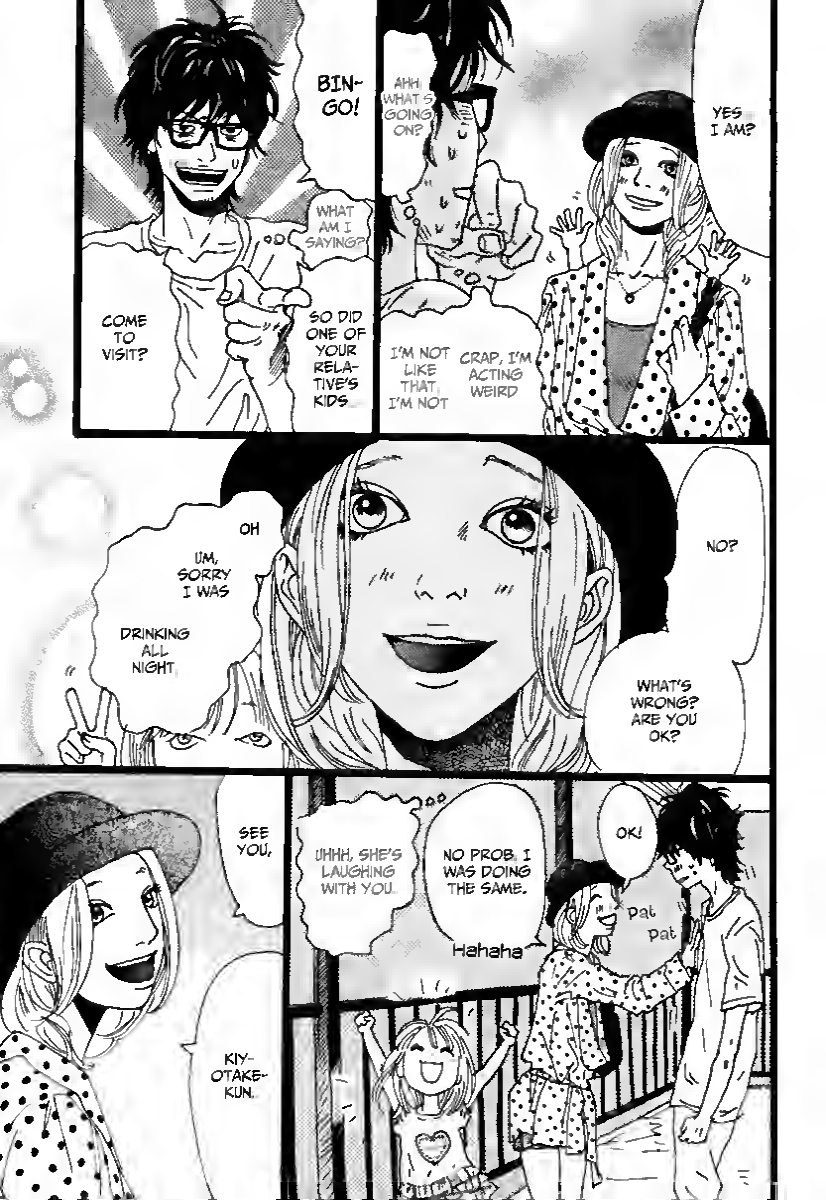
struck me

suddenly.

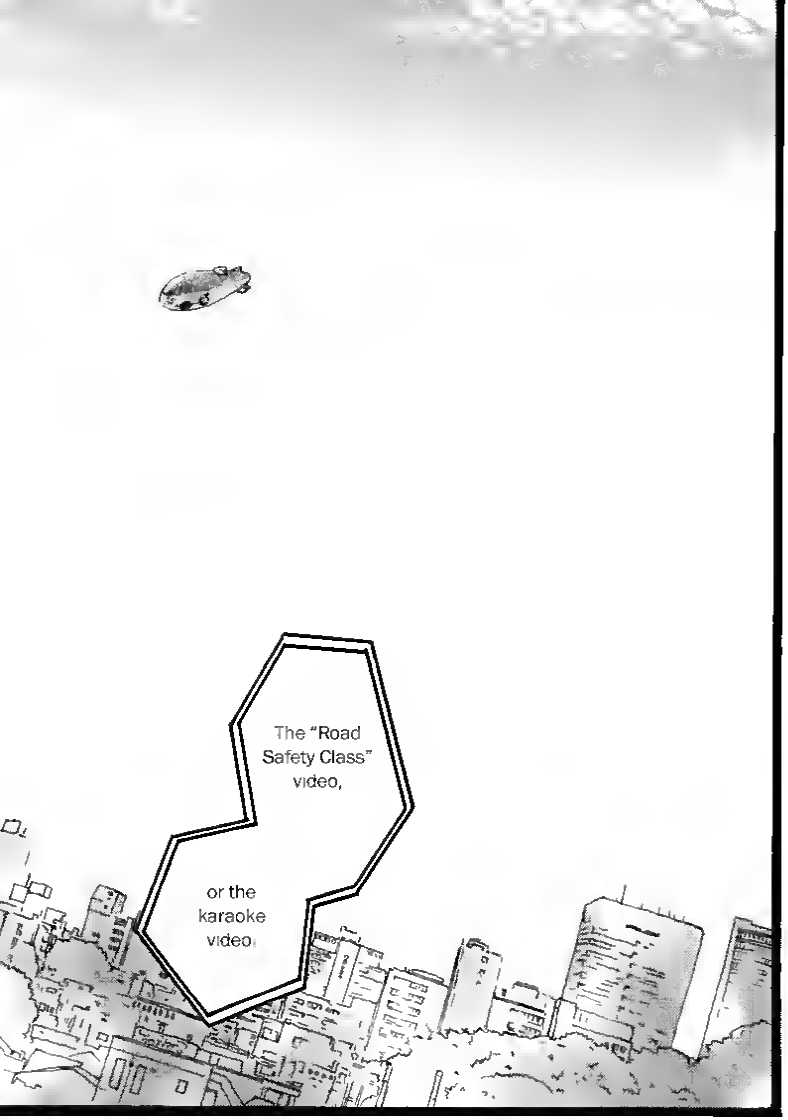
KIYOTAKE KUN.
LONG TIME NO SEE!
WOWWW
BRINGS BACK MEMORIES
I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'RE NEIGHBORS.
KU-
KUSA KA-SA-
YOU'RE TOO LOUD
IT'S STILL EARLY.
AH
I WENT TO KNOCK ON YOUR DOOR SEVERAL TIMES, BUT YOU WERE OUT, SO I GOT HUNGRY AND ATE THE COOKIES THAT WERE MEANT FOR YOU, AND THEN I THOUGHT THAT THESE WOULD HAVE TO DO. YEAH, UM, SORRY.
OH, I GUESSED RIGHT.
MY RELATIVES FROM HOKKAIDO SENT THEM TO ME
I'D RATHER HAVE THE POTATOES THAN THE COOKIES
OH, YEAH
WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR A LIVING NOW?
GRIN
OH, THE POTATOES
SORRY, BAD HABIT
Heh.
YEP, THOSE WERE MINE!
WHY POTATOES?

A SINGER...
A F-FREET-ER?
WHA?
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
OH, I SEE...
I SING AT A CLUB COME AND HEAR ME...
CLUB ZERO
WOW, A SINGER...
COOL
A SINGLE MOTHER?
KUSA-KA-SAN, ARE YOU...
IT'S JUST YOU TWO?
So it was that little girl...
HM?
OH, SO THAT'S WHY... I HEARD SINGING FROM YOUR ROOM LAST NIGHT
OH...

HEH...
...HMM, REALLY?
WHY?
I'M BY MYSELF.
SOO O...
ARE YOU
SINGLE...?
IS WHAT EXACTLY?
THAT MEANS
THAT CHILD


BIN-GO!
WHAT AM I SAYING?
COME TO VISIT?
SO DID ONE OF YOUR RELA-TIVE'S KIDS...
AHH WHAT'S GOING ON?
I'M NOT LIKE THAT, I'M NOT
CRAP, I'M ACTING WEIRD
YES, I AM?
OH
UM, SORRY I WAS DRINKING ALL NIGHT
NO?
WHAT'S WRONG? ARE YOU OK?
SEE YOU,
KIY-OTAKE-KUN.
UHHH, SHE'S LAUGHING WITH YOU.
NO PROB. I WAS DOING THE SAME.
Hahaha
OK!
Pat pat

KTUNK


The "Road Safety Class" video,
or the karaoke video.

MAMA! LOOK!
BLIMP
OH, THAT'S A BLIMP
Which do you want to do?
I'LL TAKE BOTH
CLUB
ZERO

Good evening.
I'm SONO.

WHOA
MAN, SHE HAD A GREAT VOICE...
NO WAY...

CLANK
CLANK
CLANK
WAS SHE ALWAYS THAT GOOD ?
DID SHUN ...KNOW ABOUT IT?
SING TOO?
Eep!
YOU.
Y—
GULP

MISTER UNKNOWN ACTOR!
'SUP!
MOOO OOOO MMMY!
IT'S EVEN SINGING.
WAH, WAH, WAH.
WAIT, HOW DID IT KNOW?
SHAD-DUP!